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# USDA GRADES - to help you choose



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**AMS-544**

(formerly C&MS-79)



Agricultural Marketing Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture

# usda grades — to help you choose

Consumers have a right to know--and a right to choose.

These basic tenets--"buyer's rights"--have been proclaimed by each of the last three Presidents and are the reason for the educational materials outlined in this publication.

These materials, employing the theme "USDA Grades--To Help You Choose," are aimed at providing consumers with information they can use in shopping for food.

They translate into layman's language the U.S. Department of Agriculture's quality grade standards.

USDA grade standards are used widely throughout the food industry to provide both buyers and sellers with information about the quality of foods. They are the basis for nation-wide Federal-State grading services, which provide official certification of quality. But such technical expertise has not, in the past, been widely available to consumers.

Following is a brief "catalog" of materials available--or soon to be available--for teachers, commercial firms, consumer workers, or anyone interested in better knowledge in the market place.

## THE "HOW TO BUY" PUBLICATIONS

Basic information on grades and on "how to buy" is contained in the series of publications carrying the running title of "How to Buy ...." These pamphlets present the best information available from AMS commodity specialists in a form readily understandable and usable by consumers. Now available are:

How to Buy Beef Roasts. Illustrates and describes 10 beef roast cuts, USDA grades for beef, how much to buy, suggested cooking methods. Chart of cuts. 1968. 16 pp. (G-146) 10 cents.

How to Buy Beef Steaks. Illustrates and describes 16 beef steak cuts, gives degree of tenderness for each, explains USDA grades, suggests amounts to buy, how to cook. Chart of cuts. 1968. 16 pp. (G-145) 10 cents.

How to Buy Butter. Explains USDA grades for butter, requirements such as flavor and keeping ability. Tips on storage and use. 1968. 8 pp. (G-148) 5 cents.

How to Buy Canned and Frozen Fruits. What the grades mean, other factors to consider, can size, how to read the label. Chart of uses by style. 1971. 24 pp. (G-191) 30 cents.

How to Buy Canned and Frozen Vegetables. What the grades mean, other factors to consider, can size, how to read the label. 1969. 24 pp. (G-167) 30 cents.

How to Buy Cheese. Encyclopedic listing of 29 types of cheese, showing flavor, place of origin, color and texture, and shapes. How to read a label, USDA grades for cheese. Identification chart. 1971. 24 pp. (G-193) 20 cents.

How to Buy Dry Beans, Peas, and Lentils. Provides tips on buying, storing, and using these convenient protein foods. A full-color centerfold illustrates superior grade for selected beans, peas, and lentils. 1970. 12 pp. (G-177) 25 cents.

How to Buy Eggs. Information on USDA grades, sizes, price comparison. Tips on care, storage, and cooking. 1968. 8 pp. (G-144) 10 cents.





How to Buy Fresh Fruits. Describes some 30 fresh fruits, what to look for in buying, what to avoid. Where produced, when in season. 1967. 24 pp. (G-141) 15 cents.

How to Buy Fresh Vegetables. Gives information on more than 40 vegetables, how to select good quality, what to avoid, varieties, where produced, when they're in season. 1967. 24 pp. (G-143) 15 cents.

How to Buy Instant Nonfat Dry Milk. Information on USDA grades, what the product is, how to use and store it. 1967. 8 pp. (G-140) 10 cents.

How to Buy Lamb. Illustrates and describes 13 popular lamb cuts. USDA grades for lamb, how much to buy, suggested cooking methods. Chart of cuts. 1971. 16 pp. (G-195) 15 cents.

How to Buy Meat for Your Freezer. Points you need to consider, such as how much to buy, quality, dealer reputation. How to compare costs of sides, quarters, wholesale cuts, and retail cuts. What USDA grades mean. 1969. 28 pp. (G-166) 20 cents.

How to Buy Potatoes. Tips on buying and storing potatoes including information on U.S. grades, types of potatoes, defects to avoid. 1972. 12 pp. (G-198) 15 cents.

How to Buy Poultry. What the USDA grades mean, age classifications, what to look for on the label. Tips on buying, cooking, storing. 1968. 8 pp. (G-157) 10 cents.

How to Use USDA Grades in Buying Food. Illustrates and tells what the grades mean for meat, poultry, eggs, fruits and vegetables, and dairy products. Also gives information on inspection programs. 1971. 12 pp. (G-196) 15 cents.

USDA Grade Standards for Food--How They Are Developed and Used. Gives the history and function of grade standards, how they are developed and used today. 1971. 20 pp. (C&MS-90) Not for sale. Contact AMS Information Division.

Non-food "How to Buys"--

How to Buy a Christmas Tree. Illustrates and describes 5 major species. Selection and care of a tree. USDA grades. 1971. 12 pp. (G-189) 15 cents.





How to Buy Lawn Seed. Types of lawn seed and their uses.  
How to read a label. 1969. 6 pp. (G-169) 10 cents.

A number of other "How to Buy" leaflets are being written or are in press. These include:

How to Buy Dairy Products (to supersede How  
to Buy Butter and How to Buy Instant Non-  
fat Dry Milk)

How to Buy Jams, Jellies, and Spreads

How to Buy Fruit and Vegetable Juices

How to Buy Olives, Pickles, and Relishes

Reprints of these booklets. A number of organizations--including retail stores, trade associations, and extension-educational groups--have reprinted these booklets for distribution to customers, students, and members. Reproduction negatives or positives may be purchased directly from the Government Printing Office at the prices listed below. Order by jacket number and make checks payable to "The Public Printer." Send orders to: Assistant Superintendent of Planning Service Division, Room 830-C, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20401.

How to Buy Instant Nonfat Dry Milk. 448-279. \$29.00

How to Buy Fresh Fruits. 438-443. \$79.00.

How to Buy Fresh Vegetables. 438-444. \$82.00.

How to Buy Eggs. 453-465. \$22.00.

How to Buy Beef Steaks. 438-445. \$48.00.

How to Buy Beef Roasts. 456-968. \$48.00.

How to Buy Butter. 385-575. \$22.00.

How to Buy Poultry. 445-883. \$19.00.

How to Buy Meat for Your Freezer. 438-447. \$62.00.

How to Buy Canned and Frozen Vegetables. 389-302. \$81.00.

How to Buy Canned and Frozen Fruits. 428-078. \$100.00.

How to Buy Lawn Seed. 359-464. \$15.00.

How to Buy Dry Beans, Peas, and Lentils. 374-474. \$53.00.

How to Buy a Christmas Tree. 443-955. \$39.00.

How to Buy Lamb. 437-951. \$44.00.

How to Buy Cheese. 428-601. \$49.00.

How to Use USDA Grades in Buying Food. 422-498. \$31.00.

The AMS Information Division also has on hand a singleset of offset negatives for some of these booklets, which are available for loan to groups interested in reprinting them.

#### "HOW TO BUY FOOD" PACKET

Also available, for sale at the Government Printing Office, is a packet of the first nine "how to buy" publications, under the title of "How to Buy Food." The packet, featuring an attractive cover of the same design as the bulletins, is sold for \$1.25.



## SPANISH LANGUAGE "HOW TO BUY" LEAFLETS

All of the "How to Buy" leaflets are scheduled to be printed in Spanish, but only five are now available. These are:

Como Comprar Fruta Fresca (How to Buy Fresh Fruits). 1972. 24 pp. (G-141-S) 20 cents.

Como Comprar Hortalizas Frescas (How to Buy Fresh Vegetables). 1972. 24 pp. (G-143-S) 20 cents.

Como Comprar Bistecs (How to Buy Beef Steaks). 1972. 16 pp. (G-145-S) 15 cents.

Como Comprar Carne para Conservar en el Refrigerador (How to Buy Meat for Your Freezer). 1972. 28 pp. (G-166-S) 20 cents.

Como Comprar Habas, Guisantes, y Lentejas en Seco (How to Buy Dry Beans, Peas, and Lentils). 1972. 12 pp. (G-177-S) 25 cents.

## DISPLAY MATERIALS

Several types of display materials--for varying uses, ranging from conventions to the classroom--are available under the program.

Posters -- A set of 10 color posters is available for classrooms, retail displays, or for consumer meetings. They tie in with the "How to Buy" publications, and include useful buying information themselves. Order them from the Government Printing Office for \$1.75 a set (Catalog No. A88.38:G75). Single free sets are available to teachers and consumer groups from the USDA Office of Information. Write for: Posters, USDA Grades Help You Choose.

Portable Display Panels -- A small number of silk-screened cardboard panels--identical to the posters described above--are available from the AMS Information Division. They also may be borrowed from many AMS field offices and some Extension Service offices. These panels can be set up in different ways and used as a table-top exhibit at consumer meetings, fairs, or other events.



Portable display panels, used as a table-top exhibit. The posters are identical, but printed on lighter paper--they can be mounted on cardboard and used as a table-top exhibit.



# USDA GRADES \* TO HELP YOU CHOOSE



USDA Grades - To Help You Choose -- a 20-foot, audience participation exhibit, suitable for use at large, national meetings. Use is limited to Washington, D.C.





USDA Grades - To Help You Choose -- a 10-foot exhibit, featuring the same panels as the table-top exhibit; suitable for use at large meetings, but use is limited to Washington, D.C.

Exhibits -- Two exhibits were designed for use at larger meetings and conventions, but it has become prohibitive in cost and manpower to ship them to locations outside of Washington, D.C., where they are stored. Their use, therefore, is currently limited to national meetings or conventions being held in Washington. The larger of the two exhibits is a 20-foot structure which features audience participation--push buttons, audio-phones, and a grading quiz game.

The smaller exhibit is a 10-foot display, with a limited amount of audience participation. The panels are the same as those used for the posters and the cardboard table-top exhibit.

Groups wishing to have either of these two large exhibits displayed at a national meeting in Washington, D.C., should contact the AMS Information Division.

## TEACHING AIDS

Instructor's Handbook -- A "manual" for teachers of consumer education has been prepared which includes sample plans for teaching food buying, a bibliography of source materials (both printed and visual), "consumer quizzes" that are both entertaining and educational, and reference materials useful to the teacher. The manual is designed to be used with the basic "How to Buy" leaflets, the set of posters, and the Spanish-English booklet of reproducible flyers (see below). The handbook, titled: "How to Buy Food--A Manual for Teachers," will be available in single copies from USDA's Office of Information, after summer 1972.

Bilingual Teaching Aid -- A bilingual teaching aid, "Como Comprar los Comestibles--How to Buy Food," PA-976, is now available. This booklet contains 31 individual handouts in English--with the same number in Spanish--which can be readily reproduced by the teacher either by offset printing or by xerography (duplicating machine). Individual flyers on a broad range of food products, with information on buying, cooking, and storing, are included.

Single copies are available free to teachers from USDA's Office of Information. Others may purchase the booklet for 50 cents from the Superintendent of Documents. Order by Stock Number 0100-1416.

# Como Comprar LOS COMESTIBLES

Material Bilingue  
de Enseñanza

Cómo Utilizar Este Folleto

# How to Buy FOOD

## A Bilingual Teaching Aid

For use in family economics  
and consumer education  
courses in secondary schools  
and adult education pro-  
grams.

## Using This Booklet

Following are 31 reproducible source pieces  
for use as handouts in classrooms or in fac-  
to-face contacts. Pages are perforated so  
they may be easily removed and reproduced  
by copier or duplicating equipment. Each  
source piece is provided in both Spanish and  
English on facing pages.

These flyers are based on—and are designed  
to be used with—other consumer education  
materials published by the Consumer and  
Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of  
Agriculture. A complete list of other materials  
can be found in CANS-79 obtainable from  
address below. An index to items included will  
be found on the last page of this booklet.

Information Bulletin  
Consumer & Marketing Service  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
DA-975

## Como Comprar COCTEL DE FRUTAS ENLATADO



ALMACEN  
RACIONES POR GATA

COMO Hallar LA CLASE DE CALIDAD

VEA LA MARCA DE CALIDAD (U.S. GRADE) SOBRE



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
National Food Guide for Buy Smart and Smart Foods. G-197

Information for producers and processors

## How to Buy CANNED FRUIT COCKTAIL



ALMACEN

COMO Hallar LA CLASE DE CALIDAD

VEA LA MARCA DE CALIDAD (U.S. GRADE) SOBRE



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
National Food Guide for Buy Smart and Smart Foods. G-197

Information for producers and processors

One-page Flyers -- Additional flyers are produced from time to time as individual pieces. Like the bilingual booklet, each flyer contains information condensed from, or supplementing, the "How to Buy" leaflets and is written in a simple style to make it useful to teachers at all levels, including those whose classes are of a low literacy level. As sufficient flyers are developed, a second volume supplementing PA-976 will be published. In the meantime, a few individual flyers are available to teachers from AMS Information Division.

## AUDIO-VISUALS

Also tied in to this program are several audio-visual aids.

Two filmstrips or slide series are available: "How to Buy Eggs" (C-139) and "How to Buy Beef" (C-123).

The filmstrip versions may be purchased, for \$5.50 a set, from Photo Lab, Inc., 3825 Georgia Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20250. Cost for the slide series is \$11 for "How to Buy Eggs" and \$12 for "How to Buy Beef."

Two motion pictures produced in recent years tie in with this information program. One is "Janet and the Genie," a 28-1/2-minute color film aimed at high school economics students and giving a rundown on grades for various kinds of foods, as well as meat and poultry inspection. The second is "A Mark of Quality," a 13-1/2-minute color film aimed at a somewhat more mature audience and giving a good explanation of the meaning of grades for beef and how the grading system works. Both films are entertaining rather than documentary in approach. The films may be borrowed from State film libraries, located at most land grant colleges, or from USDA. They may also be purchased from USDA's Motion Picture Service.

## A NOTE ON SOURCES

For purchase of Government publications, send check or money order (no stamps) to the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402. A discount of 25 percent is given for any order of 100 or more of a single title.

Single free copies of some publications are available from USDA directly. There is usually a limit of 10 titles per person. Write to: Office of Information, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Agricultural Marketing Service  
Washington, D.C. 20250  
- - -

Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use \$300

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
AGRICULTURE  
AGR 101



For information about this consumer education program, comments and suggestions for improvement, or for help in preparing a consumer education program based on the "How to Buy Food" concept, contact the AMS Information Division. Write: Marketing Services Branch, Information Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.